

Massive, on-going media consolidation is creating a frightening, insular atmosphere and skewed perspectives within the United States, a country historically known for its acknowledgement of the importance of freedom of speech and media. Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. My tax dollars go toward funding their use of this allegedly public commodity. But when large companies control the airwaves, we--the tax-paying citizens--get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you for your time and attention.